EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY
JUL 09 1992

Depot Town Rag

Volume 15, Number 7 "All the news in one block in one month."

100% FREE Rag content

July 1992

- Four-page special
- **Heritage Jazz funded**
- *Toxic threats again*
- **Ypsi yclept historical?**
- We love a parade!

and other strictly local stuff. . . .

A Publication of the DEPOT TOWN ASSOCIATION, INC. The Old Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

Dateline: Depot Town

Bob Blackmer, father-in-law of Gwen at Miller's Ice Cream Parlor and Emporium, remembers sitting in the crossing guard tower in 1913 watching the Wild Bill Cody circus train unload. He was five years old then. You figure it out.

•

Dee Riley comes down almost every Monday for a haircut. He was one of the kids who used to pass out bouquets of flowers from the depot gardens years ago.

•

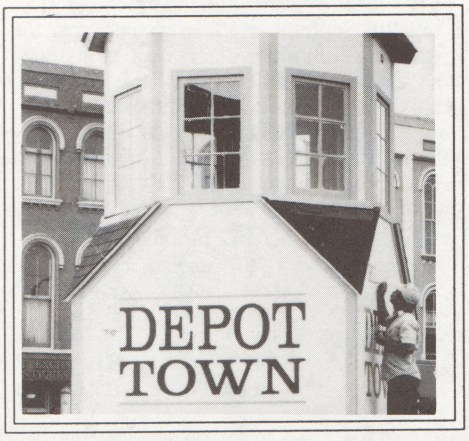
Everybody digs these digs: Early June saw the sidewalk dug up in front of Standard Printing to install new water lines. By mid-month, new gas lines were being put into the former Artrain Building at 52 E. Cross. By Heritage Festival the whole block may be dug up again.

•

Steve Gross says, if he ever opens another antique shop, he'll call it "Back in a Minute Antiques." That would be a good neighbor to the "Coming Soon Coffee House." Watch for "soon" getting here this month. It'll be a long-awaited and very grand opening.

•

Historical Museum docents reviewed the fifteen-year history of *The Depot Town Rag* and agreed that the primary editorial policy must be to keep the rest of the world from finding out just how much work all this preservation ethic really is.



John Eddleman, of Graphic Specialties, puts the final touches on Depot Town's new destination sign, the replicated 1890's Crossing Guard Tower. Three windows were already broken before the year-long project was done. Landscaping will complete the project.

Depot Town denizens are ready for lunch at one of the district's several sidewalk eateries.

Friendly sidewalk cafés add to neighborhood's ambiance & security

There's no blinking police car parked across the corner; no grids to pull over the shop windows. You won't find burglar alarm warnings or bullet-proof shields surrounding the cash register. Not in Ypsilanti's historic Depot Town. The seige mentality that has crept into so many formerly friendly commercial districts has not yet reached one of Michigan's oldest shopping centers.

Down in Depot Town you'll find smiling people out on the streets and sidewalks eating their lunches and catching some rays. Or they'll sit down and have an ice cream sundae or a summer tonic in the shade of an umbrellaed table. They lean over the fences or flower boxes and talk with passers-by. They wave to friends who drive by, still looking for a place to park. They're not very modern; it's an old fashioned style and it certainly works -- at least it seems to work down here.

Tables can be found on the sidewalks in front of ice cream parlors, restaurants, sandwich shops, and saloons in Ypsi's old railroad district and, if you're early enough, you can find a great vantage point from which to watch the many activities of this unique area of interchange and commerce.

The amenities of hometown life are still easily found in this small city just at the edge of Detroit's metropolitan sprawl. Right alongside the Conrail/Amtrak line to Chicago there are people who still know just about everybody on the sidewalk and can order from the menu without having to read it. Most of the 'regulars' not only know what they want, but so do the waitpersons who, more often than not, will just bring it to them - without asking - moments after they sit down at their table.

But you don't have to be born and raised here to fit such an insular life style. *Tourista*, antiquing the block for the very first time, can still sit and gawk at all this Ameri-corniness. Even people without paint on their trousers can receive the same courteous and responsive service. And, if they're alert, they'll start meeting people's eyes when they pass and return some friendly smiles themselves.

After all, there's no reason why we can't all do our part to make the sun shine every day -- no matter the weather.

Some suggest that you can still share a table with total strangers in some parts of the world but they indicate this sanguine style is so much easier down here in Ypsi's old Depot Town.

Support our sponsors who support *The Rag*

Baked On Automotive Finishes · Complete Collision Repair
CITY BODY EST. 1930
CARSTAR
20 E. Cross Street
482-4737 • 482-9353 • Fax: 482-0181

Trade a paperback for one of Barb's for only 70c plus tax! Crazy!
Crazy Barb's
Paperback Book Exchange!
Mon-Sat 10am-6pm
50 East Cross **484-4564**

Therapy -- for adolescents & adults
(313) 481-1200
Depot Town Counseling Center
Diane Louise Parfitt
MA, LLPC
individual • couple • family • group

Our only Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Parlor
Miller's 1840
Ice Cream Parlor and Emporium
42 East Cross
Over 30 Flavors!
• Yogurt • Sherbet • Sundaes
• Malts & Shakes
• Old-fashioned sodas
• Ice Cream pies & cakes
• Cards and Gifts
• Jelly Belly candies
• Hand-packed quarts & pints
• Catering
• Serving lunches
485-7546
Sun-Th 8 am - 9 pm, Fri-Sat 8 am - 10 pm

• Custom Draperies
• Vertical Blinds
• 1" Blinds
• Shutters
• Shades
• Wallpaper
• Installation
• Repairs
Esquire Custom Drapery & Blinds SINCE 1953
Ann Arbor 663-7011 • Ypsilanti 482-6338
10 E. Cross St. Ypsilanti, MI 48198

• Brochures
• Business Cards
• Flyers
• Copy & Fax Service
Hansen's
Standard Printing
35 E. Cross St. • Ypsilanti, MI
• (313) 483-0339 •

Depot Town braved coal soot, wrecks, diesel fumes; is toxic waste from the Augusta incinerator next?

Does nine miles seem far away? Nine miles is the distance from Depot Town to the proposed nation's second largest commercial hazardous waste incineration and landfill.

Envotech, also known as Wayne/Michigan Disposal, and a host of other names, is proposing the site in Washtenaw County, targeting Augusta Township. The company has a documented history of violations involving toxic wastes at their current facility in Van Buren Township. They have been caught illegally trying to bury radioactive waste at a site not approved for this type of waste by the Michigan DNR and have also been caught trying to illegally bury Dioxin at this same facility. These people, no matter what they call themselves this week, cannot be trusted.

400,000 tons of hazardous toxic waste - approximately 60% of which would be imported from other states is projected to be burned and buried each year at the site for 20 years. Envotech guarantees its containment for 10,000 years. I am not comfortable with their guarantees. The local community is outraged. The concept of burning and storing toxic waste undermines efforts to develop better ways to handle these substances. Europe and the United States have been using technology since the 1970's to re-use, recycle, reclaim and chemically neutralize hazardous waste, however it is not as profitable for Envotech as mass collection, burning and storing.

I accept that toxic waste must be managed, especially maintaining Michigan's industrial base. However, incineration and deep well storage are not a viable alternative.

The proposed site sits among hundreds of acres of family-owned farmland, wetlands and the area's only ground water source. The fall-out area of 30 miles consumes Milan, Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor and includes several Federal prisons. Will Envotech guarantee our safety when/if an "accident" occurs and we must evacuate our homes? How will the prisons be evacuated? Will Envotech or the taxpayers pays for their hospitalization if they are effected? What if a truck carrying toxic waste exiting of I-94 spills over in an intersection? And our women of childrearing age, can Envotech dispute the data stating birth defects and neurological damage from breathing the plume daily? What would a 16-story smokestack, 75 trucks a day and a 100-foot high hazardous waste landfill do to area's property values?

Envotech says it won't harm them at all. But Envotech employees aren't rushing to build their family's homes in the incinerator area.

There is simply NO PRICE Envotech can offer to buy our health, our farms, our great lakes, our quality of life and respect for future generations. The good news is IT'S NOT TOO LATE. The DNR and the decision making board appointed by Engler will hold a series of four public meetings for listing to our educated, emotional, well-researched opposition and arguments. We have been informed by other communities who have fought and won similar battles that a large turn out by the public at these meetings is of immense importance. The first of such meetings will be held July 26, 1992. The place has yet to be determined. Please call MCATS (Michigan Citizen's Against Toxic Substances) for info on the dates of these meetings and other info on how you can express your opposition.

Don't freeze with fear. Get angry, outraged and spread the word against the proposed incinerator.

Hope to see you July 26th. Sincerely, Therese Foot, Ypsilanti

Heritage Festival to underwrite August jazz

This August's musical event will enjoy the financial backing of the Heritage Festival Committee which is in the throes of deciding whether it should pull the 'heritage' concept out of the Visitors & Convention Bureau. Active volunteers say that, even if 'heritage' left Ypsilanti, the Jazz end of the history would still find its roots in Depot Town.

Jazz wasn't really born in Ypsilanti but, after it spread up and down the Mississippi from New Orleans to Chicago, a bit of it slopped over into Ypsi a few years ago and it stuck in and around the old Freighthouse and city parks and down in Depot Town.

A decade of Winter Series, Frog Island weekends in summer, and the annual Heritage Jazz Competition each August have made it seem as if the tradition of this uniquely American music must have started here. But it didn't.

Maybe it was the special affinity people feel for those old buildings in the Ypsilanti Historic District that helped this musical form get such a good hold on the community. At any rate, hearing such a variety of auditory art flow from the stages set up around Depot Town seems completely natural and appropriate.

Watch for August's tent behind Aubree's!

Fall election needs a nominating committee

As Dave Blackmer (Miller's Ice Cream Parlor) moves from vice-president into his presidential position for next year, he'll be looking for a dynamic and creative nominating committee to fill the next three offices for the Association's September election on September 17. Just last year the standing committee chairs began to be seen as 'sitting' committees, and they're up for re-appointment or new appointment, too.

Recent years have seen neighbors pay their annual dues and sit around the Old Caboose in lawn chairs to conduct their district buinsess.

1991-1992 DTA officers

President	A. William French	483-1870
Vice president	Dave Blackmer	485-7546
Secretary	Sandee French	483-1870
Treasurer	Bettie Dodd	482-6371

DTA Sitting Committees

Membership	Bettie Dodd	482-6371
Events	Carolyn McKeever	483-4256
Rag sales	Dave Blackmer	485-7546
New sponsors	Judi Monaghan	485-4851
Freighthouse	Margaret Harner	482-6373
Heritage Festival	Steve Gross	482-1780
Editor	Tom Dodd	482-6371

Strictly local stuff:

July 1992

Depot Towners are invited to participate in any or all of the following activities for the good of this old commercial district:

Depot Town Association
7:30 p.m. Thursday, 16th
The Old Caboose

Depot Town Antique Engine Club
7:30 pm, Thursday 23rd
Freighthouse Coffeeshop

THE DEPOT TOWN RAG

A publication of the Depot Town Association, Inc. a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation dedicated to preserving the unique character of the neighborhood and to the enhancement of its business climate.

-Tom Dodd, editor

The Depot Town Association, Inc.
A. William French, president
c/o The Old Caboose
400 Market Place
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

482-0735
Fingerle Hollister Wood
Ypsilanti's Largest LUMBER COMPANY
2800 East Michigan Ave.
THERE IS A MATERIAL DIFFERENCE

Aubree's
SALOON
35 East Cross Street
Since 1873

Freeman Bunting Insurance Agency
107 West Michigan Avenue
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197
Telephone: 482-4732
• Betty Campbell • Jim Campbell
• Nancy Petosky • Chuck Conklin
• Mary Lou Linke • Ken Burcaw
Security through insurance since 1921

Cheese Sampling and Recipes
using our cheeses and dairy products
Saturday, May 9
11am - 3pm

YPSI FOOD COOP
Sun. 12-5, M,T,Th, F 10-7 Wed. 10-9 Sat. 9-7
312 N. RIVER ST. 483-1520

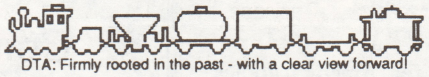
Depot Doo
Fine Design in Hair Style

25 East Cross • 484-3045

Ypsilanti Recycling Project
• Take the load off landfills
• Reduce municipal spending
• Conserve our natural resources
• Preserve our environment
651 Rice Street
Friday: noon - dusk, Saturday: 9am - 3pm

RENTAL•SALES•SERVICE
ACTION RENTAL
Gerri Lewis
Vice President
4051 Carpenter Rd.
(1 blk S. of Meijers)

Depot Town Association, Inc., 18 June 1992


DTA: Firmly rooted in the past - with a clear view forward!

Vice President Dave Blackmer chaired the meeting; Tom Dodd acted as secretary. Dave reported that gas line work could continue for another three weeks on East Cross Street.

Treasury: $2225.75 in the general fund.

City Parks and Recreation Director Amy MacMillan reports:

- Frog Island is ready for the jazz festival
- The City's Heritage Festival ordinance is being changed to recognize Chamber of Commerce, financial reports, permit applications, etc. Second reading by Council is July 6.
- Riverside and Frog Island Parks will again be locked at night. (Board members noted that police foot patrols on the block have been very effective this summer.)
- Fall and winter events at the Freighthouse will be announced in July. Some dates are still open for neighborhood planners to fill. Contra dances, concerts, and other activities will continue into the new season.
- Eight north-side parking lot lights are not working, with little response from Edison.

***Rag* Report:**

- The editor made a presentation on *The Rag* to Historical Museum docent/guides at their annual recognition luncheon.
- The June run was reduced to 750 - down from 1500 - and July's will be a 4-page edition.
- Eleven sponsors are overdue and will be contacted for their continued support.

Heritage Festival & Jazz: With a budget of $108,000, the planning committee plans to underwrite this year's Jazz Competition in Depot Town for $16,000. (See item on page 2.) Paul Giles has negotiated satisfactorily with Comfort Inn regarding a bill for Winter Jazz Series.

DDA (Depot Town Downtown Development Authority): Paul Fetters is awaiting bids on various projects. Crossing Guard Tower lights and windows are broken, landscaping is coming soon. Last year's park benches need another coat of varnish.

Frog Island Festival: DTA should realize up to $1800 profit on the 32-page, 2-color Frog Island program book which was made possible by our loyal business sponsors. Many thanks for their support and special thanks to the Ypsilanti Press for its printing and to Lynda Hummel for her active sales campaign.

Alphabetically speaking, we're OK...

Y-ever not?

There are so few Y-towns around, that Ypsilanti certainly ought to take advantage of its unsual initial in slogans, signs, and acronyms as we promote the delightful amenities of Our Town.

Only two letters are less represented by municipalities in the state of Michigan. There are five Q-towns and six Z-towns. For some reason, B is the most represented first initial of Michigan cities and towns. From Babcock with a population of 30 to Byron Center with 36 folks, they're on the mitten maps, too. (Too often, residents of the Lower Peninsula forget that the U.P. *also* makes a mitten, with the left thumb being the Keweenaw Peninsula.)

Of the Y-places on our state's map there are only eleven: Yale, Yalmar, Yalmar Station, Yankee Springs, Yargerville, Yates, York, Yorkville, Ypsilanti, Yuba, and Yuma. Most map mavens will be surprised to see two Yalmar versions and may even wonder what happened to Yalmar Heights and Upper and Lower Yalmars. Others may have placed Yuma only in Arizona. York, of course, is also known as Mooreville and is the west environ of our neighbor known as Milan.

Seekers of Ypsi's alphabetic uniquenesses might wish to play with other Y-words with the following serving as a jump start:

- *Yesteryear* found its way into August themes a few years ago when the first Ypsilanti Yesteryear Heritage Festival was created. Lately, it's been abbreviated to Heritage Fest. It could have become a "Yesterfest!"
- *Yclept* is a word we might bring back to popular usage for our own local selfishness. It was popularized by Spenser & Milton referring to "called, named, or known as . . ." What about "Ypsilanti Yclept Heritage?"
- Perhaps the best new slogan is the simple YES. We could just improve upon the "Yes M!chig!an" slogan with "Y.E.S. = Ypsilanti's Extra Special!"

The Rag encourages its readers to elaborate. We'll print your Y-responses here in August.

Think positively. Y not?

Ypsilanti's
Farmers' Market
Open all year 'round
Wednesdays & Saturdays
In the Freighthouse
down in Depot Town

A Depot Town SAMPLER

They're lining up for Ypsi's parades:

Memorial Day

Downtown to Depot Town to Highland Cemetery with ceremonies held at mid-point on the Cross Street Bridge, this Norman Rockwellian street art features flags, veterans, scouts and every marching band in the area.

4th of July

This traditional hoopla for America comes straight down Michigan Avenue with flags, scouts, military stuff, floats, decorated bikes, Corvettes, muralled vans and more. The street-side crowds are often as colorful as the folks in the parade. It's a two-way spectacle.

Heritage

An August assemblage of delightful old stuff: antique autos, horses, old costumes, old values and old-time home town pride. Calliopes and circuses are sometimes a part of this entourage, with elephants, lions and tigers! From Recreation Park to Dowtown to Depot Town, our history is watched from Victorian front porches and post-modern recreational vehicles.

Homecoming

High schools and colleges lead the fall season - sometimes through downtown, sometimes around the campus - with the usual complement of football rah-rah, cheerleaders, and marching bands. Lately, these parades have marked the advent of the Rowdy Party Season.

Santa's Parade and Street Dance

In order to understand how a block-long parade can be held in the month of December and coincide with a 'street dance,' one must realize the block is in Ypsi's historic Depot Town. 'Nuf said? Caribbean dancers, Vietnamese pigs, elves, miniature horses and Mr. & Mrs. Claus and Company; all combine to make a festive, fun and funny cold weather event.

DTA, July 1992

Teacher's Shop
& LEARNING CENTER, LTD.
All materials for Classroom & Curricula
Your K12 CONNECTION
(313) 482-6373
16 E. Cross Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

PROFESSIONAL CUSTOM FRAMERS
482-8785
RIVER ARTWORKS
√ QUALITY
√ TIMELY SERVICE
WE DO ART... ...TO ART
48 East Cross Street
in Historic Depot Town

Hon's
Flowers & Fancies
46 East Cross
482-2124

TED'S
Auto Electric
307 North River • 483-1238

Ike's Depot
BARBERSHOP
40 East Cross

James MacDonald's
Antiques
29 East Cross • 481-0555
Apple Annie's
Vintage Clothing

Olde Towne
Coin & Gold
24 E. Cross Street

Mr. Coop's
Cars Wash
317 E. MICHIGAN AVE.

Ad Art
313-483-4256
517-592-8708
Design and Layout
Typeset for ads, brochures, books, manuscripts, resumés, catalogues.
Complete production, graphics, consulting

Depot Exchange
Antiques
We love to buy antiques
54 E. Cross Street
482-1780

RE/MAX®
Of Ann Arbor
Independently Owned & Operated
900 Victors Way, Suite 190
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108
Multiple Listing Service
MLS™
Office: (313) 663-0400
(313) 482-1279
(313) 483-6131
Fax: (313) 663-0451
(800) 253-6288
Richard M. Reid
Paul M. Giles